

STATE SENATOR • MICHAEL PRUSI • 38TH DISTRICT

Prusi Press Release

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SENATOR PRUSI ANNOUNCES UPGRADES TO 34th AVE IN MENOMINEE

TEDF Grant encourages L.E. Jones to increase investment in U.P.

LANSING – State Senator Mike Prusi (D-Ishpeming) today expressed his appreciation to both the Michigan Department of Transportation’s (MDOT) Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDF) program and the Granholm Administration for their recognition of L.E. Jones’s vital contribution to the Upper Peninsula economy. As a result of a \$64,000 TEDF Grant, 34th Avenue in Menominee will receive necessary improvements, making the road capable of two-way truck traffic and improving safety by increasing the turn radius at the U.S. 41 intersection. As a result of the failing road structure and the fragile and high precision nature of L.E. Jones’s products, concern existed that the current road condition and narrow turn radius might cause damage to products during transport.

“34th Avenue has been in need of serious repair and I am pleased with MDOT’s recognition of this problem as essential to both the transportation needs of L.E. Jones and the economic viability of the U.P.,” Sen. Prusi said. “The entire community will benefit from an improved, safer road system and the economic stability these upgrades will provide.”

L.E. Jones specializes in the production of engine valve seat inserts. The company is currently the only certified supplier of heavy-duty exhaust valve inserts to Cummins and the sole supplier for intake and exhaust valve inserts for Caterpillar. They also supply valve seat inserts to over 100 additional companies across the Country and to the entire American aircraft market. Currently, 34th Avenue is not designed to carry the current 8,000 annual shipments of goods and materials to and from L.E. Jones. These new road improvements will go a long way in encouraging the company to invest \$2.0 million locally for new production equipment and enable them to create 25 new jobs at their Menominee facility by 2005.

“I commend both MDOT and L.E. Jones’s in their decision to move forward with this project,” Prusi said. “Projects like this are essential to growing our local economies and bringing good paying jobs to Michigan communities.”

(MORE)

TEDF's goal is to support economic growth through transportation investments critical to developments that create and retain jobs in targeted industries. The Office of Economic Development and Enhancement evaluates projects three to four times a year selecting those that provide the greatest return on investment and best meet the directives established by the legislature.

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Mike Prusi serves as Democratic Vice Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. He represents the 38th Senate District, which includes all Upper Peninsula counties west of Luce County.